

Executive Director

Position Summary

The Executive Director of the Marion Palace Theatre is a visionary leader who stewards the theatre's historic legacy while shaping its future as a hub for cultural vitality, creative expression, and community connection. This role requires strategic leadership, cultural competency, and the ability to cultivate broad partnerships across the arts, business, education, and civic sectors.

This is a role for a leader who knows, values, and loves the unique character of small cities in the Midwest—a person who recognizes that Marion is both rooted in tradition and poised for reinvention. The Palace thrives because of its close ties to the community, and its next Executive Director must be committed to building authentic relationships here. Key Responsibilities

Strategic Leadership & Vision

- Lead the Palace with an emphasis on long-term strategy, sustainability, and innovative uses of the historic theatre.
- Position the Palace as both a cultural landmark and a dynamic venue for new forms of performance, community events, and creative engagement.
- Guide board and staff in strategic planning, goal setting, and evaluation.
- Foster a culture of inclusion, creativity, and collaboration throughout the organization.
- Promotes and advances the Palace's mission
- Works to ensure the Palace's daily operations as well as strategic goals serve the Palace's mission

Community Engagement & Cultural Competency

- Serve as a highly visible ambassador, cultivating authentic relationships across Marion and the region.
- Lead initiatives in community-engaged artmaking, ensuring that programming reflects diverse voices and creates meaningful opportunities for participation.
- Build partnerships with schools, civic organizations, social service agencies, and businesses to maximize the Palace's community presence.
- Represent the Palace at events, in media, and through regional and statewide networks.
- Explains the importance of the Palace's mission to the general public as well as Palace membership.
- Communicate with members and the general public on how the Palace is serving and advancing its mission

Fundraising & Development

- Lead comprehensive fundraising strategy including grants, sponsorships, memberships, and major gifts.
- Write and manage grant proposals to public and private funders (e.g., state and federal agencies, foundations, corporations).
- Partner with the Board of Directors to cultivate donor relationships and secure long-term philanthropic support.
- Design and execute campaigns for capital improvements, restoration, and innovative programming.

Programming & Artistic Vision

- Shape programming that both honors the Palace's heritage and explores contemporary possibilities.
- Curate a balance of touring acts, local productions, educational initiatives, and new community-driven projects.
- Support community artists and directors while ensuring high artistic quality and financial sustainability.
- Encourage innovative use of the theatre and May Pavilion for non-traditional events, collaborations, and partnerships.

Organizational & Financial Stewardship

- Ensure the Palace's fiscal health through sound budgeting, forecasting, and financial oversight.
- Audit current staffing structure and lead reorganization efforts to strengthen efficiency, accessibility, and alignment with strategic goals.
- Supervise and mentor senior staff, fostering professional growth and collaboration across all functions.
- Guide policies and systems that support effective, equitable operations.
- Steward the physical facility, balancing preservation with adaptive use.
- Acts as a vital liaison between Board and the Palace staff.
- Provide relevant information and reports in a timely and clear manner.
- Provide information and professional guidance the Board needs to govern effectively
- Assist the Board in developing a strategic vision and plan.
- Facilitate Board meeting.

Qualifications

- Proven record of strategic leadership in arts, culture, or nonprofit management.
- Strong fundraising and grant writing experience with demonstrated results.
- Commitment to cultural competency and inclusive community engagement.
- Background in theatre, performing arts, or cultural programming with a passion for heritage preservation and innovation.

- Outstanding communication skills; ability to inspire and represent the organization publicly.
- Financial acumen and experience managing budgets in complex organizations.
- Demonstrated experience in staff development, organizational assessment, and reorganization for impact.
- Deep appreciation for the culture, pace, and potential of Midwestern small cities, and an ability to lead in ways that resonate locally.
- Ability to build partnerships and foster trust across diverse constituencies.

The Opportunity

The Marion Palace Theatre is a historic treasure and a vital cultural engine for Marion and the surrounding region. The Executive Director will have the opportunity to honor the theatre's 1928 heritage while leading it into a new era of creative possibility—where the Palace is not only a venue but a catalyst for community identity, economic vitality, and imaginative growth.

This role is best suited for a leader who finds joy in the scale of a small Midwestern city—where the Executive Director's presence is felt, relationships are personal, and the impact of creative vision is tangible in the life of the community. The Executive Director will have a mandate to shape an organization that is sustainable, welcoming, and responsive to its community.

Please Submit Cover Letter and Resume to apply@marionpalace.org By Nov 3 2025